

HERITAGE COMMISSION

Draft Minutes

November 4, 2010

The Heritage Commission held its regular monthly meeting in the City Council Chambers at 37 Green Street, Concord, New Hampshire, on Thursday, November 4, 2010, at 4:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order and Seating of Alternates:

Chairperson Philip Donovan called the meeting to order at 4:45 p.m.

Present at the meeting were Chairperson Philip Donovan, Vice-Chairperson Frederick Richards, and members Steve Shurtleff, Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, Dr. Bryant Tolles, and James McConaha. City Planner Douglas Woodward and Administrative Specialist Donna Muir were also present. Absent from the meeting were Committee members Marilyn Fraser, Carol Durgy Brooks, and Robert V. Johnson, II.

Chairperson Donovan elevated the alternate members to full member status for the meeting.

2. Minutes of the October 7, 2010 meeting:

The Commission considered the minutes of the October 7, 2010, Heritage Commission meeting. A motion was made by Mr. McConaha to accept the minutes as presented and seconded by Mr. Shurtleff. Chairperson Donovan asked if there was any discussion regarding the minutes. The motion accepting the minutes of the October 7, 2010, meeting passed unanimously.

3. New Business:

a. Presentation on the CLG grant for the historic schools survey

Ms. Hengen reviewed the slide show presentation she prepared on Concord's Historic Schools. The presentation was part of the Certified Local Government Grant received by the Heritage Commission to prepare surveys for six of Concord's schools. The schools surveyed included Walker, Dame, Eastman, Summer Street, Rumford, and Penacook High Schools. Ms. Hengen provided much history and architectural design details on each of the six schools.

She stated that preliminary information she received from the NH District of Historic Resources indicates that all six schools would be determined eligible. Chairperson Donovan thanked Ms. Hengen for her presentation.

He stated that he was in attendance at a public meeting held to determine possible future uses of Dame School. While the plans are in the very early stages, there has been talk of using Dame School as a community center. He also stated that he was invited to be part of the Task Force 3 meetings to look at the other schools that will not be used by the Concord School District. Ms. Hengen stated that the information from the surveys could be used in discussions regarding the disposition of Dame School as well as the other school buildings.

Ms. Hengen also suggested that the survey information on all the schools should be sent to the City's Assessing Department. Mr. Woodward said he wasn't sure if the Assessing Department used historical data in their assessments.

- b. *Public hearing and subsequent action on an amendment to Section B-5, Voting, of the Heritage Commission's procedural rules relative to adding a requirement for members to meet a juror standard or to otherwise disqualify themselves from participation in any decision making when reviewing applications in the Historic District and applications for Demolition Delay.*

Chairperson Donovan opened the public hearing at 5:25 p.m. There was no one who wished to speak, and Chairperson Donovan closed the meeting at 5:26 p.m. Vice-Chair Richards had a concern regarding the two hats that are worn by those who are Heritage Commission members and on the Demolition Delay Committee. He feels that as a Heritage Commission member he is an advocate for the preservation of old buildings, but as a member of the Demolition Delay committee he should appear objective and not advocate for preservation, which is conflicting. Chairperson Donovan agreed, stating that the Demolition Delay Committee has more of a judicial role, as the committee is governed by ordinances. Ms. Hengen disagreed. Chairperson Donovan stated that he thinks the amendment to Section B-5, Voting addresses the Historic District more than the Demolition Delay Commission.

Mr. Woodward stated that the Demolition Delay Committee's role is to suggest alternatives to demolition, which is where the Committees' knowledge of preservation and reuse, etc., comes from due to their membership on the Heritage Commission. The Demolition Delay Committee's role is to decide the worthiness of a building and then decide whether or not to hold a public meeting.

Mr. Woodward suggested that the City's Solicitor be invited to a meeting of the Heritage Commission, so that these questions and issues can be raised and responded to by the Solicitor.

Chairperson Donovan tabled the discussion on this issue until the Solicitor could be in attendance at a future Heritage Commission meeting. Mr. Woodward will invite the City's Solicitor.

- c. *Demolition Delay Committee Review*

Chairperson Donovan asked that Vice-Chair Richards provide a report to the Commission regarding a demolition delay application for 23-25 Green Street. Vice-Chair Richards stated that a tour of the building is scheduled for Monday, November 8, 2010, at 1:00 p.m. He stated he has been in touch with the NH Division of Historical Resources to discuss their possible involvement. John Hoyt, Director of the Concord Housing Authority, stated that the Housing Authority is not receiving federal funds for this project, so the NH Division of Historical Resources would not have jurisdiction over the building. However, Nadine and other employees at the Division are interested in taking the tour, along with members of the press. Mr. Woodward suggested that it would be appropriate to notify the Director of the Concord Housing Authority about the public being interested in being in attendance during the tour.

Vice-Chair Richards stated that the public hearing for the Demolition Delay Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, November 10, 2010.

Discussion ensued regarding the importance of rehabbing old historic buildings as part of Concord's desire to be greener. Mr. McConaha stated that the City is focused on Concord

becoming a greener city and feels that the Housing Authority needs to be looking at keeping the building to redevelop. Ms. Hengen stated that the Concord Housing Authority was given the authority by the City Council to be the City's redevelopment authority.

Chairperson Donovan suggested to Mr. Woodward that discussing the EPA's proposal to the City would be appropriate at this time. Mr. Woodward stated that the City applied for a grant through the EPA, which was offered to state capitals. The grant was to assist state capitals in sustaining and redeveloping historic properties in the downtown areas. He stated that although the City did not receive the grant, EPA called and stated they had some discretionary funds that could be used to help Concord. Mr. Woodward stated that there have been some preliminary phone calls, information exchanged, and suggestions for appropriate properties. He said that EPA plans to visit the City in December. EPA will be paying \$65,000 for consultants to assist Concord. Mr. Woodward said that currently Engineering, Fire, Code, and Planning were included in the meetings and phone calls, and he feels that it is important that the Heritage Commission, Planning Board, Main Street Concord, and Concord 20/20 be invited as well. Vice-Chair Richards thinks that it is important for the NH Preservation Alliance to be included.

Mr. McConaha asked about the upcoming demolition of the North State Street property and whether that property was part of the Demolition Delay review. Vice-Chair Richards stated that it would be coming up for review in the near future, as the City's Engineering Division was getting ready to work in that area. Mr. Woodward explained that the Conservation Commission is looking into purchasing the back land on that property and that the Commission is awaiting approval from the City Council.

d. Request for Project Review by the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources

Chairperson Donovan stated that the request for project review for National Grid regarding Concord Pond was provided as information only, as there were no historic properties being affected.

There being no further business or discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Shurtleff and seconded by Vice-Chair Richards to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried. The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST:

Donna Muir
Administrative Specialist